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UNCLAS MADRID 001140

SIPDIS

FOR H:DELORES PARKS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: SPAIN COUNTRY CLEARANCE FOR STAFFDEL EFFORD

REF: STATE 73851

1. Embassy welcomes and grants country clearance to Staffdel Efford members, Richard Efford, Professional Staff Member, House Appropriations Committee (HAC), Cheryle Tucker, Leigha M. Shaw, Michael Malone and John Blazey, also from HAC, to travel to Madrid and Barcelona, April 11-18. The purpose of the visit is to review fuel cell bus programs, including hydrogen generation facilities and fueling stations, and to receive briefings on the Talgo Passenger Rail system.

2. Control officer for this visit is Economic Officer Aaron Jensen who can be reached at: Office PH: (34) 91-587-2384; Cell: (34) 676-007-799; e-mail: jensenaw@state.gov; Fax: (34) 91-587-2292. Information about hotel reservations will be sent septel.

3. Visitors are reminded that bearers of diplomatic and official passports coming to Spain on official business need to obtain a Spanish visa prior to arrival in Spain.

4. THREAT ASSESSMENT:

In general, Spain is safe. However, Madrid, Barcelona and other large cities in Spain -- including resort/convention areas such as Benidorm -- attract a large number of criminals and pickpockets and frequent incidents of crime of opportunity against the unwary do occur. Carry only essential items including a photocopy of your passport's photo page. Visitors can protect themselves against crime by being street-smart, alert and aware of their surroundings. In the event you are victimized by crime, or experience any security-related incident, please contact the Embassy's Regional Security Office at 91-587-2550 or after hours at 91-587-2355. Official visitors to the Embassy in Madrid or the Consulate General in Barcelona are encouraged to receive a security briefing from the RSO office at their earliest convenience. Additional information regarding safety and security in Spain is available on the U.S. Department of State's website (<http://www.state.gov>) and the U.S. Embassy's website ([www.embusa.es](http://www.embusa.es)).

Travelers are encouraged to review the most recent Worldwide Caution issued by the Department of State. As the Department of State continues to develop information on any potential security threats to Americans overseas, it shares credible threat information through its Consular Information Program documents, available on the Internet at <http://travel.state.gov>. In addition to information on the Internet, U.S. travelers can hear recorded information by calling the Department of State in Washington, D.C. at 202-647-5225 from their touch-tone telephone, or receive information by automated telefax by dialing 202-647-3000 from their fax machine.

MANZANARES